

**Articles and Sermons :: Let us pray****Let us pray - posted by Jimm (), on: 2004/12/31 10:00**Review of "Let Us Pray"
by Watchman Nee

I read a book on prayer by Watchman Nee called, "Let us pray". This book gives a refreshing approach on the subject of prayer. To be honest with you, I had the (foolish) impression that Watchman Nee was more useful in expounding on doctrines (I don't mean that facetiously) and teaching that he was in the prayer department. The book reveals a man who has some powerful truths to reveal about prayer. As with most of his books, it is short and simple and yet it is profound. He does not set up laws but he expounds on "principles of prayer" which anyone can adopt regardless of their stage in spiritual progression. To me it shouts out, "the first oracles of God!". It is so easy to lose track of our responsibilities to God in prayer and our enemy (the devil) in the Spiritual world. Although the book is not about Spiritual warfare it does expound quite a lot on how our prayers can be less self-centered and more kingdom-centered and harmful, even frightening to the Devil.

This is a summary of part of the book:

PRAYER BEING A BASIC CHRISTIAN RIGHT

Christians have a basic right while living on earth today, the right to receive answers to prayers. The moment a person is regenerated, God gives him the basic right to ask of Him and to be heard by Him. John 16 says that God answers when we ask in the name of the Lord so that our joy may be made full. If we pray without ceasing, we will live a Christian life that is full of joy on earth today.

If we unceasingly pray, yet God does not unceasingly answer our prayer, or if we have been a Christian for years and God hardly or never listens to our prayers, there must be something seriously wrong. If we have been a Christian for three to five years without receiving one answer to prayer, we are ineffectual Christians. We are not just a little ineffectual, but very ineffectual. We are children of God, yet our prayers are never answered! This should never be. Every Christian should experience God answering his prayers. Every Christian should have frequent experiences of prayers being answered. This is a basic experience. If God has not answered our prayers for a long time, it means that there is surely something wrong with us. There is no way to deceive ourselves in the matter of answers to prayer. If it is answered, it is answered. If it is not answered, it is not answered. If it is effectual, it is effectual. If it is ineffectual, it is ineffectual.

We would like to ask every Christian: Have you learned to pray? Has God answered your prayer? It is wrong for prayers to be left unanswered, because prayers are not just a speaking into the air. Prayers are meant to be answered. Unanswered prayers are vain prayers. Christians must learn to have answered prayers. Since you have believed in God, your prayers should be answered by God. Your prayers are useless if God does not answer them. You must pray until your prayers are answered. Prayer is not only for spiritual cultivation but even more for receiving answers from God.

Prayer is not that easy a lesson to learn. A person may be a Christian for thirty or even fifty years and yet not learn to pray well. On the one hand, prayer is not a simple thing. On the other hand, prayer is so easy that a person can pray as soon as he believes in the Lord. Prayer can be considered the most profound as well as the simplest subject. It is so profound that some still cannot pray well despite learning about it all their lives. Many children of God feel that they do not know how to pray even up to the time they die. However, prayer is so simple that the moment a person believes in the Lord, he can start praying and have his prayers answered. If you begin your Christian life in a good way, you will always receive answers to your prayers. If you do not have a good start, you may not have an answer to prayer for three or even five years. If you do not have a proper foundation, you will need much effort to correct it later. Therefore, once a person believes in the Lord, he must learn to receive answers from God for his prayers. We hope that every believer will pay attention to this matter.

Re: Let us pray - posted by Jimm (), on: 2004/12/31 10:04

Asking

All prayers should be genuine petitions before God. After a brother was saved, he prayed every day. One day a sister asked him, "Has God ever listened to your prayer?" He was surprised. To him prayer was just prayer; why did anyone have to bother about whether or not they were answered? From that time on, whenever he prayed, he asked God to answer his prayer. He began to consider how many of his prayers were answered. He discovered that his prayers were quite vague and capricious. It did not matter whether God answered them, and it did not matter whether God ignored them. They were like prayers to God for the sun to rise the next day; the sun would rise whether or not he prayed. He had been a Christian for a year, yet none of his prayers were answered. All that time he had been just kneeling and muttering words. He could not pinpoint what he had asked for. This amounted to not having asked for anything at all.

The Lord says, "Knock and it shall be opened to you" (Matt. 7:7). If what you are knocking on is just the wall, the Lord will not open the wall to you. But if you indeed are knocking on the door, the Lord will surely open the door to you. If you ask to go in as well, the Lord will surely let you in. The Lord said, "Seek and you shall find" (v. 7). Suppose that there are many things here. Which one do you want? You must ask for at least one thing. You cannot say that anything will do. God wants to know what you specifically want and what you specifically are asking for. Only then can He give it to you. Hence, to ask means to demand something specific. We have to ask. This is what it means to seek and to knock. Suppose you want something from your father today. You have to ask for the specific thing you want. If you go to a pharmacy for medicine, you must say exactly what medicine you want. If you go to a market to purchase vegetables, you must say what vegetables you want. It is strange that people can come to the Lord without saying what they want. This is why the Lord says that we need to ask and ask specifically. The problem with us is that we do not ask. The hindrance is on our side. In our prayers we need to speak what we need and what we want. Do not pray an all-inclusive prayer in a frivolous way, caring little whether or not it is answered.

A new believer needs to learn to pray. He needs to pray with a specific goal in mind. "You do not have because you do not ask" (James 4:2). Many people go through the motion of prayer without asking for anything. It is useless to spend an hour or two hours or even eight or ten days before the Lord without asking for anything. You need to learn to ask for something; you need to knock, really knock hard, at a door. Once you clearly identify the entrance and seek to go in, knock hard at the door. When you seek something specific, you will not be satisfied with just anything; you want that particular thing. Do not be like some brothers and sisters who stand up in the meeting to pray for twenty minutes or half an hour without knowing what they want. It is strange that many people have long prayers that do not ask for anything.

You must learn to be specific with your prayer. You should know when God has answered your prayers and when He has not answered your prayers. If it makes no difference to you whether or not God answers your prayers, it will be hard for you to effectively pray to Him if you come across a difficulty in the future. Empty prayers will not be effectual in times of need. If prayers are empty when needs are specific, one cannot expect any solution for the problem. Only specific prayers can deal with specific problems.

Re: - posted by crsschk (), on: 2005/1/13 10:00

Ah, the gems lurking in the studies of SI's archives. If you are the adventurous type, a interesting journey is to go prowling about the forum topics and look at the headings that have "0" or perhaps only "1" response(s) to them.

As the front page can only accommodate so much at one time, the last or 'bottom' posting gets squeezed out as others come in, and may only get a glance depending on the volume coming through at any given time.

Combining this with the search engine can produce all kinds of results...like this one from our brother James. Actually was looking for a spot to tag on another OC excerpt (on prayer) and happened upon this.

Quote:
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Probably wouldn't have come to my mind either, but this really good. Now, where to put this excerpt...